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EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND EUROPEAN PAPERS AS SEEN BY FORMER HONOLULU NEWSPAPERMAN

Charles L. Rhodes. Writes of
Impressions Formed
Abroad

COMPARES PAPERS OF
HONOLULU WITH LONDON'S

Finds British Press Very Un-
fair in Treatment of Po-
litical Opponents

How Europe and European affairs, including politics, look to a former Honolulu newspaper man is told in a letter that Charles L. Rhodes has written to Walter G. Smith, former editor of the Star, and which has been sent to Hawaii because of its interest. Mr. Rhodes, a former editor of the Star, refers to Duke Kahanamoku's triumphs and British envy at American performances at Stockholm. He says:

LONDON, July 26.—Though I have not heard from you directly, since coming to this side of the ocean, I have not been allowed to forget that there is a Hawaii. Duke Kahanamoku's performances at the Olympic games in Stockholm were the text of many sneers in the London papers about America and American athletes. The relative failure of British athletes as compared with American and other athletes at the Olympic games was severely felt. There were columns of stuff about it in the London papers. One set of writers tried to comfort themselves by persuading themselves that the American competitors entered the tests to win, while the English competitors entered only for sport of the thing. Another set of writers tried to heal their wounded pride by saying that the English athletes were drawn from England, while the American athletes were drawn from all nationalities, including Hawaiian, thereby using Duke Kahanamoku to point a moral and adorn a tale.

But Honolulu and Hawaii have been recalled to me in various other ways. A few days ago I met in Westminster Abbey Mr. Wells, formerly manager of Wailuku plantation. In Florence I met a former teacher of the Punahou Preparatory, and just the other day some English friends were telling of one of their acquaintances who had just returned from a trip round the world, and in reply to the question what place of all she liked the best, said Honolulu.

Naturally I have been an interested reader of the London papers. Long newspaper habit would prompt this if

there were nothing else, but there are a great many other things. History is being made in Great Britain pretty rapidly. Lloyd George's revolutionary budget of 1909 was only a beginning. Last April the coal strike was ended by the adoption of the principle of the minimum wage by Parliament. The National Insurance Act, affecting thirteen or fourteen millions of employed persons, has gone into effect within the present month. And there is before Parliament, with the Liberal party and their allies committed to them, the Irish Home Rule Bill, the Welsh Church Disestablishment Bill, the Franchise Bill, putting suffrage on manhood basis, and other measures looked on by the Tories and the reactionaries as the "end of all things."

London Papers. But to get back to the London papers. The more I read them the better I like the American newspapers. For one thing, the London papers are so partially unfair. Of course, American newspapers are unfair enough, but the British papers excel them in this in several respects. You expect an American paper to be partisan in its editorials, because, after all, it is only voicing the sentiments or opinions of some man, or set of men. To some extent this partisanship creeps into its news columns in headlines, or in the news which is left out as well as the news which is left in, and as long as newspapers are made by men and not by gods, this will continue. But when an American paper purports to report a man's speech, or even to state his position with a view to refuting it, there is a conscious effort at reporting his speech accurately, or stating his position fairly. But in the London papers there is nothing of this. Deliberate misreporting of public speeches is the rule. Only the guileless expect to find an ungarbled report of what a man says in an opposition paper. Even the much-vaunted complete and stenographic reports of the Parliamentary debates in the Times can not be depended on.

Says Papers Not Fair. As for stating an opponent's position fairly, or with any real effort at fairness, no English paper that I have seen is guilty of it. Of course, in America the extreme partisan papers, and the baser sort of papers, never state an opponent's position fairly. But in England this is true of the better papers, and those that claim superiority and worth.

Still, by reading two papers, one on each side, you can generally get a fair idea of the matters of which they treat. But it is in the matters of which they treat that the greatest

difference between an English and an American paper, to my notion, is apparent. In the first place, the American paper publishes a great deal more matter than the English paper of corresponding grade. It is more comprehensive in its scope and field of news. It has a wider outlook. It has a great deal more enterprise. And it is because it has more enterprise that it has the reputation of being less reliable.

The "Titanic" News. Let me give you an illustration of what I mean in this particular. The first news of the "Titanic" disaster was published here in the afternoon papers. The next morning the London Times in all its editions, and the other newspapers in their earlier editions based their account of the matter on the report that all on board the "Titanic" were saved. They had that report and they were satisfied with it and made no effort to verify it or get it more in detail as an American paper would. The real truth of the disaster was so appalling that people forgot that the Times, for instance, had said that all on board were saved. An American paper in its energetic efforts to get further details would very likely have come across disquieting rumors and reports, and, on the principal of giving all the information it had to its readers, would have published them. But if it should have turned out that all on board were saved, and the disquieting reports or rumors were unfounded, then the American paper would have gained the reputation of unreliability. The times not making any such enterprising efforts to verify reports published that which is absolutely untruthful. By a sequence of events that is forgotten, it acquires a reputation for reliability.

Difference in papers. But returning to the matter of the difference of scope of American and British papers, an American paper seeks to give its readers every matter of local public concern. The action proposed, contemplated, or planned, of its Mayor or City Council, of its Park Board, of its Public Buildings Department, are all chronicled. Proposals for social betterment are reported. And then, of course, there are the accidents and crimes of the day. A little further afield the American paper tells what is happening and what is being done throughout its own State, and generally throughout the field of its circulation. Then there are national affairs, and international affairs. Besides these, there are, of course, the special departments of sports, markets, amusements

and its special feature of its women's page, and all that sort of thing. And then it gives space in proportion to the extent with which it deals with books, literature, art and music, and the purely intellectual and sociological affairs. You might read an English paper for weeks without knowing that there was such a thing as a London County Council, or a dozen or so Borough Councils within the municipal area of London, each of which is dealing with public service matters, with matters affecting the health and the rate of taxation. Or that there were boards carrying on an extensive and complete public school system. Nothing in the way of government seems to count until it gets into Parliament.

The first intimation the public gets from the London papers of far-reaching municipal projects is when the board or body having it in contemplation has to ask Parliament for some lacking approval or authority. Beyond the municipal one you would never suppose from a London paper that anything ever happened in Liverpool, or Manchester, or Birmingham, or Edinburgh, or Glasgow, to say nothing of the hundreds of places smaller than these, but still large and important. Liverpool might revolutionize municipal government and apparently it would be of no interest to the London papers. There are more date lines from places in France, one day with another, in the London papers, than from places in England, and in no degree is a London paper a chronicle, or even an index, of life in the United Kingdom outside of London.

Even in the much-vaunted matter of foreign news, the London papers publish a great deal less than the American papers in the dozen largest cities of the United States. The San Francisco papers publish more about the Italian-Turkish war than the London papers do, and a great deal more about what is going on in China.

Communications Featured. There is one feature of the London papers which is superior to that of the American papers with some possible exceptions: the space and importance given to individual communications. I have no way of knowing how many communications for publication a London paper receives, nor from what classes they come. I only know what they publish, and in general this may be said of them that they are better written and often touch weightier matters than the communications published by American papers. Seemingly also a better class of people write communications to the papers than in America; indeed, this publication of communications is one of the best features of the London papers, and goes far to redeem some of their shortcomings in other respects. It is through these communications, in large measure, that local matters of importance, and social and civic reform and interest

are brought to the attention of the public.

Paragraph Unknown. As to the literary quality of the London papers, this, of course, varies from a very high standard to one lower than is often found in America. The editorial paragraph is practically unknown in the London daily paper. It is found in embryo in some of the weekly papers. The London papers have nothing to approach in point of keenness and cleverness the editorial paragraph which some paper in almost every large American city offers its readers every day. The ablest editorials in the London papers are not abler than the ablest editorials in the American papers. This is, however, in the London papers, a more sustained quality. And there are more editorials in the London papers written with expert knowledge and wide scholarship.

Difference in Quality.

There is a more clearly marked difference of quality between the morning and the evening papers in London than is usually found in America. With a few exceptions the afternoon papers are pretty poor things, while with few exceptions the morning papers are all of good quality. I suppose the reason is geographical location. As far as the world of affairs is concerned, the day begins in London. When it is eleven o'clock in the forenoon here, which is the hour when the first editions of the afternoon papers come from the press, it is still only twelve o'clock in Rome, Vienna and Berlin, and not very much later in Constantinople and St. Petersburg, and not as late in Paris and Brussels, while it is only eight o'clock in the forenoon in New York, and still earlier in the rest of America. So that the early edition of the afternoon papers has very little of the affairs of the world of the day of publication to chronicle, and while conditions improve as the day goes on they are never in the position of the afternoon papers of New York, which have three hours the advantage of London, or of San Francisco, which has six hours advantage, or of Honolulu, which has nine. The afternoon papers, therefore, are made up of a re-hash of what has appeared in the morning papers, pieced out with such scraps of news as the telegraph may bring, or as it may gather in the London region.

The better afternoon papers, recognizing this limitation, seek to make up for it by a literary and news letter character. The best samples of these are the "Pall Mall Gazette," "Westminster Gazette," and the "St. James Gazette." The "Pall Mall Gazette" is owned by Astor and is distinctly Tory and reactionary, though, on the whole, holding itself to an attitude of decorous fairness. Like all the morning papers, and especially the larger morning papers, it devotes a good deal of space to book reviews, and that sort of thing. Its

telegraphic service is as good as any London afternoon paper, and better than most, and yet for all that it seldom publishes more than 1500 to 2000 words of telegraphic or cable news outside of such telegraphic or cable news as it may re-write or condense from the morning papers. "The Westminster" and "St. James" Gazettes publish still less.

An outsider can judge very little of the business side of a London newspaper. But, however, much it may cost to get out a morning paper in London, it would seem as though afternoon papers could be and were gotten out pretty cheaply. Take, for instance, the "Westminster Gazette." Aside from advertisements it publishes on an average about 25,000 words. This is not more than 10 per cent or 15 per cent more than the Hawaiian "Star" published daily during several years that I was its editor. I presume it is not much in excess of what the "Star" is now publishing daily. Its telegraphic service cannot be very expensive, for it seldom publishes more than 1500 words, and the bulk, if not the whole of it, comes through press associations. A great deal of its local matter is furnished by local news agencies. Another considerable portion of its matter is mere condensation of matter from the morning papers. Communications from readers comprise from 1,000 to 2,000 words as a rule, so that there is not a great deal of space left for what might be called high-grade writing. A quarter of the first page is usually occupied with advertisements of new books, half the page usually consists of what we would call editorial, and the remainder is presented under the heading of "Our London Letter," and consists of news, personal, reminiscent and argumentative, of the minor events of the day, or rather, of the day before. The second page is mainly given up to communications and to "Notes of the Day," which are, in fact, much the same kind of matter as is published in the "Star" under the heading of "Talk of the Town." On the third page there is usually a cartoon and something about cricket. The remainder of the paper is given up to news matter of various sorts. The "Westminster Gazette" is the afternoon sheet under anchor of liberalism.

The "Pall Mall Gazette," as a rule, publishes a little more matter than the "Westminster," divided in much the same way, except that it puts its most striking news on the first page and its editorial and literary matter inside. Yet the "Pall Mall Gazette" is the paper with which W. T. Stead, startled the world with his "Maiden Tribute of Babylon," and now has a very large street sale, and apparently a great deal of influence.

Crime News Not Subdued. In America the English papers are frequently held up as examples of what newspapers should be in their avoidance of the sensational, the criminal, and the lurid, but they do

not deserve this laudation. Crime, if it has deeply sordid or highly dramatic features is played up as it is in America. Sport is given quite as much space, and horseracing more, than in America, and in the best of the English papers betting commissions openly advertise.

An English paper is not as easy to read as an American for the reason that the headlines give very little index of the contents. We go to Scotland on Monday, and sail for America August 3. Mrs. Rhodes joins me in good wishes to you.

Very sincerely,
CHARLES L. RHODES,
636 Pine Street,
San Francisco, Cal.

CUPID BREAKS RECORD
IN NEW YORK CITY

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 12.—Never in its history did the marriage bureau do such a business as today. All told, 261 couples avowed their intention to wed. The former record attained one day last June was 237. The average age for the men was 22 and for the women 21.

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A Forty years.
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A I would not make it.
Q Do you publish the formula?
A Yes. On every bottle.
Q Any alcohol in it?
A Not a single drop.
Q How may I learn more of this?
A Ask your doctor. He knows.
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